
APPENDIX A: List of Interviewed Interested Parties

The interviews took place within a three-week period from November 20 to December 8, 2000, and were conducted as follows:

- **16 Interested Parties met with BFJ (November 20, November 27)**
- **18 groups/individuals were interviewed by members of the Planning and Zoning Commission between November 27 and December 8.**

In total over 110 people attended these series of discussions. The Interested Parties that met with BFJ were as follows:

- **Architectural Review Board**
- **Barons South Committee**
- **Chamber of Commerce Downtown Merchants**
- **Coalition to Save Baron's South & Winslow Park**
- **Friends of Winslow Park**
- **Historic Society**
- **League of Women Voters**
- **Land Acquisition Committee**
- **Levitt Pavilion**
- **Riverwalk Committee**
- **Parks & Recreation Commission**
- **Westport Arts Center**
- **Westport Country Playhouse**
- **Westport Senior Center**
- **Westport YMCA**
- **Youth Commission**

Meetings with members of the Planning and Zoning Commission involved the following:

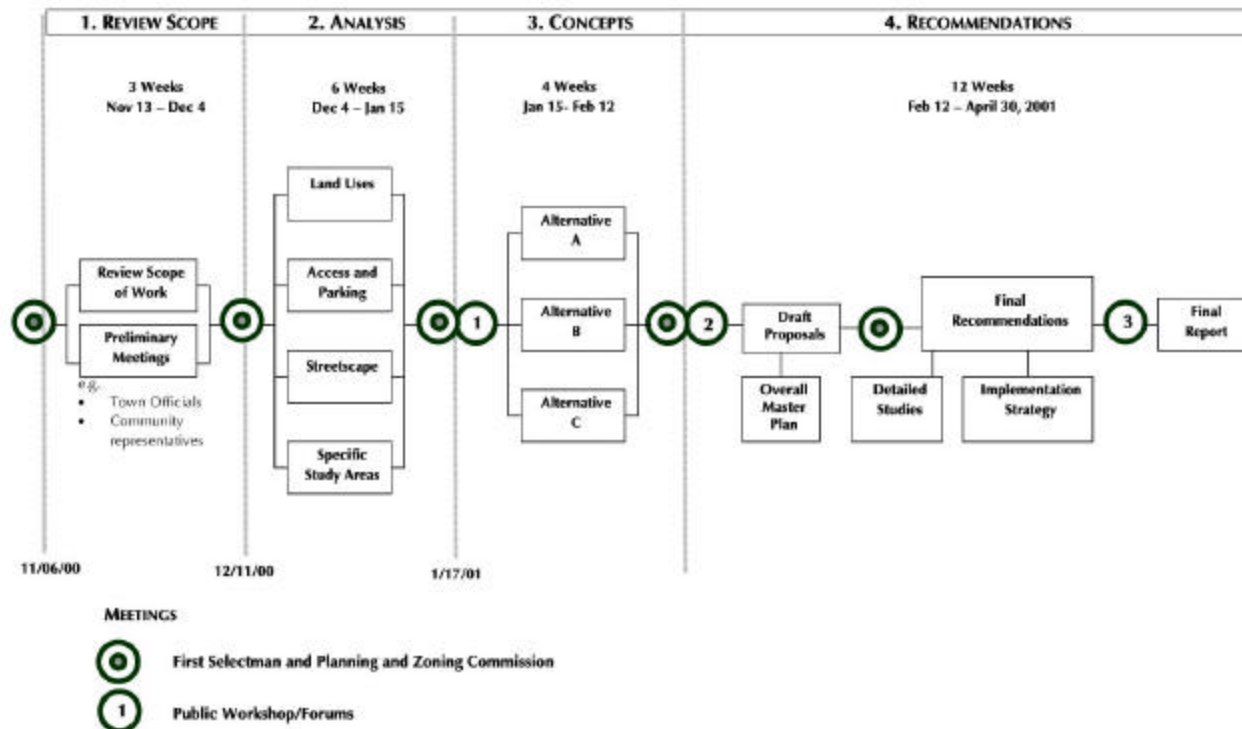
- **Beautification Committee**
 - **Christ and Holy Trinity Church**
 - **Interfaith Housing**
 - **New Neighbors of Westport**
 - **Norwalk Transit**
 - **Police Department**
 - **RTM Long Range Planning Committee**
 - **Saugatuck Congregational Church**
 - **Selectman's Maintenance Committee**
 - **School Bus Storage Facility**
 - **Westport Board of Finance**
 - **Westport Community Theater**
 - **Westport Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief**
 - **Westport Public Library**
 - **Westport Woman's Club**
 - **Westport Young Women's League**
 - **US Postal Service**
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APPENDIX B. Downtown Westport Workshop Report

Introduction

The Town of Westport First Selectman and the Planning and Zoning Commission have undertaken a downtown study to determine community goals and needs for a vibrant and functional town core. Buckhurst Fish & Jacquemart, Inc. (BFJ) was retained by the Town to assist the Commission and the First Selectman with the preparation of Downtown Plan.

This Workshop Report briefly summarizes the process and the results of the workshop session conducted on January 17, 2001. For a more complete understanding of the entire study process, this report also provides an overview of the entire process (see flowchart below). The study began in November 2000 with preliminary meetings with key interested groups. The Commission and First Selectman also met with a number of key factions and individuals. With a vast amount of knowledge gained from the meetings, a summary analysis of key issues was attained.



WORKSHOP PROCESS

The workshop was conducted at Bedford Middle School, utilizing the auditorium and other space within the building. The First Selectman, Diane Farrell and the Planning and Zoning Commission Chair Eleanor Lowenstein provided welcoming remarks to workshop participants. BFJ members provided an overview of the workshop process and a slide show highlighting the issues identified during the initial data-gathering phase. The visual presentation was intended to engage participants in a dialogue for each of the following issues:

- **Open Space**
- **Parking**
- **Traffic & Traffic Calming**
- **Land Use Mix**
- **Riverfront Uses**
- **Building Design**
- **Streetscape Design**

After a brief break, the attendants re-grouped at a table designated with one of the above noted topics. The members at each break-out group were asked to assign a recorder for notes and a spokesperson to present the groups' findings. After an hour of discussion of the assets of the downtown and the recommendation for improvement relative to the specific issue, the spokesperson presented findings to the all participants.

Summaries of each of the break-out tables follow in this report. The round table findings will assist in guiding the development of concepts for the next phase.

Open Space

The Open Space network includes a number of major park areas as well as smaller landscaped open space within downtown. Please review:

A. Future Role and Function of:

1) Winslow Park

- **Left as open space**
- **Include greater uses to help bring people to it i.e. Central Park meadows, play fields need more parking – small playground**

2) Barons South

- **Sell off piece**
- **Needs signage – access has been discouraged**
- **Utilize buildings that already exist**
- **No YMCA since it is not municipal use, it has private member ship, would be too big and the Y had the opportunity to buy the site.**
- **YMCA could be sited on Barons if it is an advantage to the Town and the old building generates taxes**
- **Senior center**

3) Jesup Green

- **Connect with Levitt near Muddy Brook – connect to parking**
- **More green**

4) Avery Commons

- **Leave untouched**

Also: West side of River – should be considered into open space plan

B. Linkages: How can pedestrian linkages be improved to?

- **Connect the various open space areas.**
- **Provide better connections between open space areas and the riverfront.**

PARKING

Interested Parties involved in the Downtown Study cited the need for additional public parking as a major priority for the downtown.

Please review:

A. The key problems related to the existing provision of parking within downtown.

- **Perception of convenient parking**
- **Shoppers vs. Employee parking**
- **Mix uses cause parking conflicts**
- **More enforcement required**
- **Poor signage**
- **One-way streets needed**
- **More educated parkers**
- **Shuttle could help increase walking within the Downtown**
- **Lack of metered parking**
- **Lack of parking in parks**
- **Out of town – commuter parking**
- **Lack of designated parking**
- **Lack of handicapped parking**
- **Merchant preferred parking**
- **Poor parking / traffic design**

B. Ideas that should be considered in providing for additional parking (location, design, etc.)

- **Relocating the YMCA will offer more parking downtown**
- **Inform where parking is available – signs and maps**
- **Metered parking**
- **Compare to other towns**
- **Use police to move traffic**
- **Shuttle – workers and shopper**
- **Consolidated parking – decks/garages**
- **Main Street should be mainly pedestrian**
- **Parks must have more parking**
- **Retail employees should park outside immediate area**
- **Education and police control programs important**

C. What priority action(s) should be taken to address the problems identified in (A) above.

- **Consolidate parking in decks/garages**
- **Employees Park in outlying lots**
- **Education – Police Control, Signs, Maps, Ambassadors – walking cops**
- **Metered parking**

TRAFFIC AND TRAFFIC CALMING

Traffic flow problems in key areas of the Downtown have been mentioned by a number of people. Traffic flow can be controlled by a number of mechanisms, including management plans, speed humps/bumps, intersection bump-outs and varying road widths.

Discuss:

A. Locations of traffic problem areas in the Downtown.

- Main Street – where 2 way becomes 1 way
- Jesup Green area – difficulty with accessing library
- Along Main Street – Parking conflicts – wipe chalk off tires – commercial loading areas
- Post Road at Church – light too slow to allow pedestrian crossing
- North Compo at Post Road – North Compo too narrow for flow
- Parker Harding – Confusing flow pattern – off center view with light

B. Where in the Downtown traffic calming is required/necessary.

- Circular flow of traffic up Main & Circle around to east and west
- Pedestrian Mall for main street – Configure access only for commercial vehicles
- Main Street a one way heading north up to Avery Place
- Link customer parking behind Main Street with the Elm Street parking lot.
- Mix road/parking linkage from Avery Place to Elm Street to help the Main Street one-way flow pattern
- Change lighting signal at Main and Post Road – synchro nize and more pedestrian friendly
- “Courtesy is contagious” signs throughout downtown
- Flash lights at drivers even when police are not around.
- Reconfigure Parker – Harding – Green space
- Trolley to link downtown areas

C. What types of traffic calming measures are preferred.

- **Bump-outs along key pedestrian areas of the downtown**
- **Trolley linking parking areas**
- **Better/more pedestrian crossing areas**

LAND USE MIX

The dominant building uses in downtown include a mix of retail, office, institutional, government and park uses. Please discuss:

A. The qualities and benefits derived from the current building / land use mix.

- **The concentration of retail is desirable**
- **The riverfront is a benefit**
- **Zoning regulations important in order to retain the present commercial conditions**
- **Mixed uses encouraged**

B. What uses/activities are missing from downtown?

- **Theatre and arts center needed downtown**
 - **Town Green and Town hall should be center of Town, possibly a band shell**
 - **Common lighting, walkways and street furniture for downtown area**
 - **Lighting and walkway required for Barons South**
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C. What actions should be taken to create a fuller, more attractive mix of uses?

- **Residential in the Downtown**
- **No parking decks**
- **Pedestrian bridge from Gorham to Save the Children property**
- **Road from Imperial Avenue and Library to parking lot**

D. What uses should be considered for the YMCA site in the event that the "Y" relocates to alternative site?

- **Art Center**
- **Housing on second floor**
- **Retail uses on first floor**

RIVERFRONT USES

Parking lots and the Riverwalk abut the river on the east shoreline. Buildings, parking areas and a walkway are adjacent to the west shore. Please review:

A. The potential for a pedestrian bridge to link both sides of the river.

- **Link to West (near)**
- **Gorham Island – widen for bike**
- **Downstream - near Sunoco Station from small park on West**

B. Where a river walk could be expanded to further link to areas beyond the downtown and enhance the existing facilities.

- **More Bike paths – Baker Avenue to the western shore.**
- **Make 'Paths' Friendly so as to induce One- Stop parking**
- **Loop would provide no "dead end" parking – Saugatuck Loop**
- **Terraced Lots**
- **Bring riverwalk across Post Road along Parker Harding**
- **More fill behind Parker Harding for Park**
- **Create 'Paris' on the Saugatuck**
- **Dredge the river to bring boats to Downtown Area**
- **Extend walk to Canal Park area**
- **Extend walk to east to Imperial lot**

C. What types of facilities could be installed to encourage a more active use of the river in the Downtown area.

- **Increase water transportation**
 - **Do nothing - passive use**
 - **Dock or ramp at downtown**
 - **Need alternative to Post Road Bridge as thru traffic point**
 - **Bike and Pedestrian Bridge both above and below Post Road**
 - **More sculpture, art, fountains**
 - **Farmers Market**
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BUILDING DESIGN

Predominantly in the Downtown, buildings are 1 ½ and 2 stories in height and many are exemplary of traditional New England design. As things change, new buildings will be erected and existing buildings will be threatened by renovation and demolition. Consider:

A. What buildings in the Downtown best exemplify Westport's historic character and quality?

- YMCA is "Westport" signature building
- Shop in rear concept acceptable i.e. "Onion Alley"
- Tavern on Main – design, "up off street"
- Churches
- Westport Historical Society
- Town Hall
- Downtown Post Office – metal grill of envelopes
- "Westport Bank" – 20's look
- Village Square

B. What actions should be considered to upgrade the visual appearance of the less-attractive structures in Downtown?

- Improve area behind Inn at National Hall with landscaping/benches
- No access for people to congregate close to where they park
- Parking limit to downtown use
- Consider pedestrian area where Main Street is cut off to cars
- Main Street building mall
- Achorn Bank complex – lacking in character
- Gorham – "garden glow"

C. What design standards or guidelines (i.e. window styles, façade treatments, roof design, etc.) could be implemented to preserve the existing appearance of the Downtown?

- No flat roofs
- Height limit – no more than two stories
- Encourage Multi-use building with professional, commercial/retail, housing
- Affordable housing
- Signage: conformity of signs/retail, no "neon"

STREETSCAPE DESIGN

Streetscape includes sidewalk design, landscape treatment, street furniture, etc. that helps to establish a particular character or quality to the street.

Please discuss:

A. Existing streetscape qualities that should be retained/enhanced.

- New England character: cobblestone, brick materials, iron work, clapboard
 - Consistency of street design
 - Signs and advertising consistency
 - Examples: YMCA facades, Across from P.O., Village Square area, Old library corner, National Hall and west side of river
 - Variety of uses, architectural styles
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B. List particular problem areas and negative features that should be addressed.

- P & Z regulations that restrict change
- Inadequate pedestrian crosswalks
- Inadequate signage
- Traffic calming measures
- Increase times/events for pedestrian use of Main St.
- Parked cars: Parker-Harding/Jessup's Green e.g.
- Varied sidewalk treatment
- Inconsistent plantings
- Lack of consistent lighting
- Public / informational signage

C. Ideas and recommendations that should be considered in the Plan.

- Interface with state regarding signage, etc.
- Improved linkages: pathways, "Emerald Necklace", lighting
- Embrace river edge
- Improved garbage handling
- Consistent street furniture design
- Review town regulations regarding signage
- Examine options to provide incentives (zoning, grants, etc.)
- Improved pedestrian crossings with "bump-outs"
- Reduce continuous lengths of on-street parking

D. Identify one or two priority actions that the town should take as part of an early action plan.

- Avoid actions that inhibit long-term plans
- New street furniture e.g. garbage cans/plantings
- Cross walk design
- Study regulations that need revision: signage, incentives

"We Will Transmit This Town Greater, Better & More Beautiful Than Was Transmitted to Us"